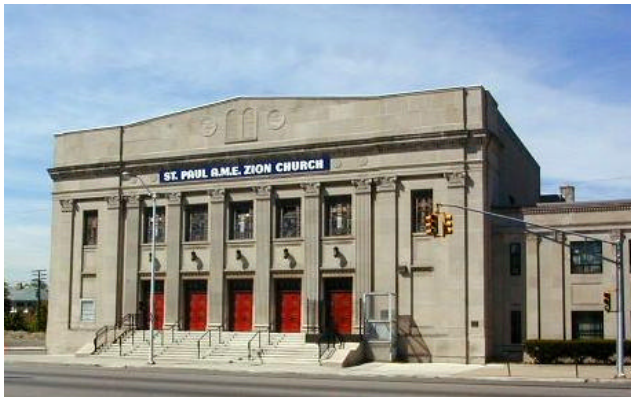


## **B’Nai Moshe - St. Paule AME Zion Historic District**

11359-11411 Dexter Avenue.

Local                    v            10/19/98  
State  
State Marker  
National



**B’Nai Moshe**



### **Historic overview:**

The firm of Payne & Kohner designed this stone faced Neoclassical structure in 1928. The structure was originally built for Congregation B’Nai Moshe but has been used by the St. Paul A. M. E. Zion Church since the 1959.

B’Nai Moshe congregation developed from immigrant Jews in the city who wished to worship the same traditional customs they brought from Hungary. Its membership had increased from the original 25-30 families in 1911 to 70 families in 1917. At that time they adopted the name B’Nai Moshe which meant “Sons of Moses”. After outgrowing several buildings, Rabbi Moses Fisher, originally leading a congregation in Chicago, contracted for the new building on Dexter to be built. By now the congregation had over 200 Hungarian Jewish families and even more orthodox Jews. It was built to serve the spiritual, cultural and social necessities of the growing congregation. In 1951 a school building was added to the main building. In 1958 the congregation moved to Oak Park under the leadership of Rabbi Moses Lehrman.

The African Methodist Episcopal Church, A. M. E., developed in 1794 when a freed slave felt discriminated against attending the predominately white Methodist Episcopal Church and created Bethel Church. In 1879, A. M. E. Zion churches were introduced to Detroit and in 1908 Bishop George Lincoln Blackwell created Blackwood Temple and St. Paul a couple years later. St Paul’s prospered and after several leaders and places of worship, Bishop William A. Hilliard moved the congregation to B’Nai. St. Paul A. M. E. Zion Church’s membership has reached about 2,000 today.

Today the school building is used for a Head Start Program, community outreach activities and religious programs.

